

# **SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

## **White Lake School District Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2006-07**

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**Dates of On Site Visit:** January 31, 2007

**Date of Report:** February 28, 2007

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This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

<b>Promising Practice</b>	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
<b>Meets Requirements</b>	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
<b>Needs Assistance</b>	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
<b>Not applicable</b>	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

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### **Principle 1 – General Supervision**

General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Teacher Surveys
- Student Surveys
- Parent Surveys
- State Data Tables
- Student Files

**Promising Practice:**

The steering committee identified the district's graduation rate and dropout rate as a promising practice. In the White Lake School District, all special education students are mainstreamed in the regular classroom, with aides in the classrooms to assist these students. As a result, the graduation rate for students with a disability is 100%. The district has had no students with a disability drop out in the last five years.

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the district meets requirements in the areas of child find activities, personnel development and employment, and ensuring students participate in statewide testing.

The White Lake School District has an effective ongoing child find system to locate, identify, and evaluate children with disabilities, ages birth through 21 years who may need special education. The district has had an average of 18 children participate in preschool screening activities over the past three years. The White Lake District has an effective pre-referral and referral system in place to ensure students are identified without unnecessary delay. There is no Teacher Assistance Team, but weekly faculty meetings allow teachers time to discuss student concerns.

There are no private schools in the district; however the Comprehensive Plan describes the appropriate procedures to follow should a private school enrollment arise, and ensuring special education services are provided in accordance with requirements of Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

All students in the district take the Dakota STEP Test.

There have been no significant discrepancies occurring between the long-term suspensions or expulsions rates for children with and without disabilities in the White Lake School District.

The White Lake School District ensures that they employ or contract with an adequate supply of personnel who are appropriately supervised and fully licensed or certified, to work with children with disabilities. The district implements procedures to determine personnel development needs and take appropriate action to meet those identified needs.

## **Validation Results**

### **Promising Practice**

Through interview, file review and observation the monitoring team cannot validate the steering committee finding identified as a promising practice under the provision general supervision.

### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team does recognize district supports that are in place which allow all students to access the general curriculum within regular classroom. The district makes effective use of assistive technology, aides, and technology to accomplish this which results in their success of a high graduation rate and a low drop out rate.

Through interview the monitoring team validates all the steering committee findings under the provision general supervision as meeting requirement. Child find activities and pre-referral and referral systems are in place and meet requirement.

## **Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education**

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- State Data Tables
- Parent Surveys
- Student Surveys
- Teacher Surveys

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the White Lake School District provides free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all students in the district and eligible children with disabilities. At the present time the White Lake School District has had no suspensions or expulsions, however district policies and procedures are in place to ensure eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 days would be provided FAPE.

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets requirements**

Through interview and file review the monitoring team validates the steering committee findings as meeting requirement under provision free appropriate public education. The district has not had any suspensions or expulsions but district policies and procedures are in place in the event the district needs to address such an issue. The district provides a free appropriate public education to all students who have been identified as a student with a disability.

## **Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation**

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- State Data Tables
- Teacher Surveys
- Student Surveys
- Parent Surveys
- Student Files

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the White Lake School District provides appropriate written notice and obtains informed consent before assessments are administered to a child as part of an evaluation or re-evaluation and ensures the evaluation or re-evaluation procedures and instruments meet the minimum requirements. The White Lake School District ensures the proper identification of students with disabilities through the evaluation process.

The White Lake School District ensures re-evaluations are conducted in accordance with all procedural requirements to ensure students are appropriately evaluated for continuing eligibility.

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets requirements**

Through file review the monitoring team validates the steering committee findings as meeting requirement under the provision appropriate evaluation. The district obtains consent prior to initial and re-evaluation and the evaluation procedures meet minimum requirements for determining eligibility. The district consistently meets evaluation time lines.

## **Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards**

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- State Data Tables
- Student Files
- Teacher Surveys
- Parent Surveys
- Student Surveys

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the district adheres to procedural safeguards. The White Lake School District informs parents of their parental rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and ensures the parents have been fully informed in their native language or another mode of communication (if

necessary) of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought. The district ensures the rights of a child are protected if no parent can be identified. The district provides the parents of a child in need of special education or special education and related services with the opportunity to inspect and review all educational records concerning the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of the child. White Lake School District has policies and procedures in place for responding to requests for due process and complaint actions that ensure compliance.

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team validates the steering committee findings as meeting requirement under the provision procedural safeguards. Parents are consistently informed of their parental rights. The district has a surrogate parent in place in the event a parent cannot be located. Parents are afforded the opportunity to inspect and review all educational records.

## **Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- State Data Tables
- Student Files
- Teacher Surveys
- Student Files
- Parent Surveys

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the district ensures appropriate procedures are consistently adhered to during the Individualized Education Programs process. White Lake School District ensures written notice for all IEP meetings is provided and it meets all required content. White Lake School District ensures the IEP team is comprised of appropriate team membership. The district ensures the IEP contains all required content and that transition plans for students are a coordinated set of activities, reflecting student strengths and interests, to prepare them for post school activities. The district has policy and procedures in place to ensure an appropriate IEP is developed and in effect for each eligible student. The students receive services in the least restrictive environment with the supports they need for successful participation.

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team validates some of the steering committee findings under individualized education program. The district does consistently provide written notice for all IEP meetings, appropriate team membership is present at IEP meetings. Students receive services in the least restrictive environment with sufficient supports in place, and an active IEP is in place for each eligible student.

### **Out of compliance: Needs Assistance**

**CFR 300.304 Evaluation Procedures** **Evaluation Procedures.** b) Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child that may assist in determining (ii) the content of the child's IEP.

**ARSD 24:05:27:01.03. Content of individualized education program.** Each student's individualized education program shall include: A statement of the student's present levels of educational performance, including: (a) How the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled students); (2) A statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to: (4) An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the regular class and in activities described in this section; and (9) For each student beginning at age 16 or younger, if determined appropriate by the placement committee, a statement of the needed transition services, as defined in § 24:05:27:13.02, including, as applicable, interagency responsibilities or any needed linkages.

Through file review the monitoring team determined the district does not consistently meet requirements under individualized education program. Functional assessment was not used to obtain specific relevant functional, developmental and academic information to assist in developing the IEP. As a result annual goals were not measurable or skill based and did not link to the present level of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP). The PLAAFP did not consistently contain the student's specific strengths and needs in the skill area affected by the disability.

**CFR 300.320 Definition of individualized Education Program**(b)Transition services. Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include (1) appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessment related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate independent living skills.

Transition evaluations were not consistently conducted addressing all seven transition areas. A report summarizing the transition evaluation results was not present and therefore affected the entire transition process within the IEP. The present level of academic achievement and functional performance page did not address the strengths and needs of all areas of transition which resulted in a lack of a coordinated set of activities to promote post secondary success of the student.

## **Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment**

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- State Data Tables
- Student Files
- Teacher Surveys
- Parent Surveys
- Student Surveys

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the district meets requirement under least restrictive environment. All students receive services in the least restrictive environment with the supports they need for their successful participation

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team validates the steering committee findings as meeting requirement under the provision least restrictive environment. General education and special education staff work together to provide the supports students need to be successful in the regular classroom.